

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims

Claim 1 (currently amended): An expression cassette comprising an adenoviral VA1 gene and a nucleic acid encoding an interfering RNA (RNAi) molecule, wherein the adenoviral VA1 gene comprises the adenoviral VA1 promoter and a coding sequence for the VA1 RNA, wherein the nucleic acid is inserted at a BstEII site within a non-essential stem region of ~~within~~ the adenoviral VA1 coding sequence ~~corresponding to a secondary stem loop structure of the VA1 transcript,~~ wherein the nucleic acid encoding the RNAi molecule encodes a hairpin siRNA (shRNA) or a precursor microRNA (precursor miRNA) and wherein upon expression the VA1 RNA contains the RNAi molecule which is processed from the VA1 RNA to become a substrate for Dicer.

Claims 2-4 (canceled):

Claim 5 (previously presented): The expression cassette of claim 1, wherein the RNAi molecule encoding nucleic acid comprises a loop containing from 4 to 9 bases.

Claim 6 (previously presented): The expression cassette of claim 5, wherein the loop contains 8 bases.

Claims 7-10 (canceled).

Claim 11 (currently amended): A mammalian cell into which has been introduced an expression cassette comprising an adenoviral VA1 gene and a nucleic acid encoding an interfering RNA (RNAi) molecule, wherein the adenoviral VA1 gene comprises the adenoviral VA1 promoter

and a coding sequence for the VA1 RNA, wherein the nucleic acid is inserted at a BstEII site within a non-essential stem region of ~~within~~ the adenoviral VA1 coding sequence ~~corresponding to a secondary stem loop structure of the VA1 transcript~~, wherein the nucleic acid encoding the RNAi molecule encodes a hairpin siRNA (shRNA) or a precursor microRNA (precursor miRNA) and wherein upon expression the VA1 RNA contains the RNAi molecule which is processed from the VA1 RNA to become a substrate for Dicer.

Claim 12 (original): The mammalian cell of claim 11, wherein the mammalian cell is a primary cell.

Claim 13 (previously presented): The expression cassette of claim 1, wherein the RNAi molecule encoding nucleic acid encodes a hairpin siRNA (shRNA).

Claim 14 (previously presented): The expression cassette of claim 1, wherein the RNAi molecule encoding nucleic acid encodes a precursor microRNA (miRNA).

Claim 15 (previously presented): The mammalian cell line of claim 11, wherein the RNAi molecule encoding nucleic acid encodes a hairpin siRNA (shRNA).

Claim 16 (previously presented): The mammalian cell line of claim 11, wherein the RNAi molecule encoding nucleic acid encodes a precursor miRNA.

Claim 17 (new): The expression cassette of claim 13, wherein the RNAi molecule encoding nucleic acid is SEQ ID NO: 1.

Claim 18 (new): The expression cassette of claim 14, wherein the RNAi molecule encoding nucleic acid is SEQ ID NO: 2.

Claim 19 (new): The expression cassette of claim 14, wherein the RNAi molecule encoding nucleic acid is SEQ ID NO: 3.

Claim 20 (new): The expression cassette of claim 15, wherein the RNAi molecule encoding nucleic acid is nucleotides 12-61 of SEQ ID NO:1.

Claim 21 (new): The expression cassette of claim 16, wherein the RNAi molecule encoding nucleic acid is SEQ ID NO:2.

Claim 22 (new): The expression cassette of claim 16, wherein the RNAi molecule encoding nucleic acid is SEQ ID NO:3.

Claim 23 (new): The expression cassette of claim 5, wherein the loop comprises SEQ ID NO:4.

Claim 24 (new): The expression cassette of claim 5, wherein the loop comprises SEQ ID NO:6.

Claim 25 (new): The expression cassette of claim 6, wherein the loop comprises SEQ ID NO:5.

Claim 26 (new): A method for producing a double stranded RNA molecule in a mammalian cell, comprising:

introducing a vector into a mammalian cell, wherein the vector comprises an expression cassette comprising an adenoviral VA1 gene and a nucleic acid encoding an interfering RNA (RNAi) molecule, wherein the adenoviral VA1 gene comprises the adenoviral VA1 promoter and a coding sequence for the VA1 RNA, wherein the nucleic acid is inserted at a BstEII site within a non-essential stem region of the adenoviral VA1 coding

sequence, wherein the nucleic acid encoding the RNAi molecule encodes a hairpin siRNA (shRNA) or a precursor microRNA (precursor miRNA);

allowing transcription of the adenoviral VA1 gene and the nucleic acid in the mammalian cell, thereby producing a VA1 RNA containing the RNAi molecule, wherein the RNAi molecule is inactive in the VA1 RNA;

and allowing the RNAi molecule to be cleaved out of the VA1 RNA, wherein the cleaved RNAi molecule is a substrate for Dicer.